

They did. Thirdly, whenever we sign—whenever I sign legislation that has bipartisan support, I always give them credit for the work they do for America.

Now, I am not going to hide my differences from them from the American people, and I have never asked them to hide their differences from me from the American people. I don't ask Senator Dole to suspend his campaign or, you know, I don't ask him to stop doing—going around saying I was wrong when I fought for the Family and Medical Leave Act, which he says all the time, that I was wrong when I stood up for the assault weapons ban or the Brady bill, and he led the opposition to it. I don't ask him to stop that.

All I'm saying is, we're supposed to show up for work here every day. And we were closer than was even reported in the press in the budget negotiations. Now they are adopting a strategy to say that "we're going to use the lawmaking process of the United States to force the President to veto bills where the main subject of the bill he is really for, because we would rather

have the veto"—and I think that's wrong—or, "we're not going to permit people to get an increase in the minimum wage. We actually want the minimum wage to fall to a 40-year low." That's what they said.

So if the Democrats in the Senate are going to one time use the filibuster position they have, which the Republicans used over and over and over and over again in '93 and '94, to an extent never before seen in modern history, more than had ever been done before—if they're going to do that, to demand a vote on the minimum wage, I have come here today not to play politics with them but to say, here is a way to balance the logjam. Let's have a clean vote on the temporary reduction in the gas tax. Let's have a clean vote on the minimum wage. Do that. It is the right thing to do. It's the right thing for America to do.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner May 8, 1996

Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President. You may have held your humor in check tonight, but you don't ever hold anything back from America every day in your job. The American people will never really know—at least, until I write my memoirs—all the magnificent things Al Gore has done as Vice President. But I'm telling you, we should all be very grateful to him, and I appreciate it. Thank you.

I want to thank Tipper for so many things: for making me more sensitive to the whole issue of mental health; for making me see the world in a different and deeper way, through the lens of her camera; and for sharing my birthday and all those crazy characteristics we Leos have. *[Laughter]* You know, there comes a time when the four of us are out at 12:30 in the morning on Saturday evening, I don't want to talk about public policy anymore—*[laughter]*—so we just let Al and Hillary go on their way and we talk about music or something.

I want to thank Don Fowler and Chris Dodd for the incredible labor of love and effort they have exerted, and all of those who work with them: Marvin Rosen and the others who have raised so much of the funds, and Terry McAuliffe and those who have helped our campaign. I thank them all so much.

I want to thank Dan and Beth and the other cochair, and all the committee who worked so hard tonight. And I'm very grateful to Stevie Wonder and to Robin Williams for not only adding a little glamour but adding a little depth to our life in their songs and in their humor. They made us think about what's really important in life and what's really important in public life. I thank them especially for honoring our friend Ron Brown. As I said when I spoke at his memorial service, I probably wouldn't be here if it weren't for Ron Brown, and I'm glad we could be here for him tonight. And thank you, Alma, for being here with us.

I want to thank the host and chairman of this dinner, Peter Knight, who has—if you want to clap for him after what he has done to you for months, I think that is a wonderful thing. [Applause] Any man who can pick your pocket and still win your applause—[laughter]—deserves to be the campaign manager of the Clinton/Gore campaign. So tomorrow he goes to work in a new job. Ever since he played a major role in our campaign in 1992, I have been profoundly impressed with his mind, his heart, his skill, his discipline. And I look forward to his leadership as we go down the road ahead. I thank him very, very much.

I want to thank the First Lady for so many things over what now are nearly 21 years of our marriage, for these remarkable 3½ years we have had in the White House, for putting up with a phenomenal amount of abuse solely because she happened to be married to me, and doing it with good humor and good grace and a strong heart. And not quite solely because she happened to be married to me; she also happens to stand for some things that some of those in the other party don't like.

But I think it's a good thing that women as well as men and girls as well as boys should have a chance to live this life to the fullest of their ability. And I do believe it takes a village to raise a child. And I think it takes a village to solve our problems and a village to make this country what it ought to be. Stevie Wonder sang it: All for one, and one for all.

And finally let me thank all of you, and let me say that I don't want to speak long tonight because, as Robin Williams said, I know I'm preaching to the saved. But I want to tell you one more time as clearly as I can what is at stake in this year and why it goes beyond the bounds of a normal election and why you cannot leave your commitment at this door, no matter how much you gave or how difficult it was. For your citizenship cannot end here.

When Al Gore and I ran in 1992, I had a clear vision of what I hoped our country would look like in the 21st century, and I haven't lost that vision. I want America to be a place where every child can grow up to live out his or her dreams without regard to their race or their religion or their ethnic group or the station in life from which they start. If they're willing to work, I want them to have a chance to live out their dreams.

I want America to be a place where our incredibly rich diversity of heritage brings us together and where we live together in peace and respect, with safe streets and good schools and a clean environment. I want America to be a place where everyone knows that we're doing our best to preserve our values together, to move forward together. I want America to be the strongest force for peace and freedom in the world in the 21st century. I want us to continue reaching out to other people and standing up for the things we've stood up for. And I believe in order to do that we have got to be willing to work together, to face our challenges and not deny them, to protect our values, not just talk about them and then regularly violate them.

These last 3½ years have been a great opportunity for us. We've still got a long way to go as a country, but no one can doubt that in every important way we're better off today than we were in 1992, when the deficit was twice as high, when we had 8½ million fewer jobs, when we had a higher crime rate, higher welfare rates, higher poverty rates, when we seemed to be drifting.

But what I want to say to you tonight is, more important than any single issue is the differences now before the American people in this election about how we will walk into the 21st century. In 1992 there was so much talk about change. Robin did that great imitation of Ross Perot. Ross Perot and I said we represent change. Sixty-two percent of the people said, "Okay, we're for change against the status quo and kind of a hands-off policy to our problems." And thank goodness in that 62 percent more people voted for me than Mr. Perot, so I got to show up here tonight. And that's what happened.

But it was change against the status quo. That is not true now. There is no status quo option. In this election there are two very different visions of change. And unlike most elections, you don't have to guess. You know where I stand, what I stand for. You know from what we've done in the last 3½ years I'll do my dead-level-best to do what I say I want to do in the next 4 years.

And now you know where they stand and what they will do. They passed a budget in 1995 which will become the law of the land if they control the Congress and the White House in 1997. They tried to do certain things

to the environment and to the fabric of this country, which they will be able to do and which they will do. And you don't have to guess.

So we can look ahead. One side says—their side—that in this great new information age with so many opportunities, Government is the problem and what we really need for the American people is an unlimited number of choices and freedom from Government. If we all just walk away, everything will work out fine. Our side says, that view forgets history. You remember what the great writer Anatole France said: “The rich and poor are equally free to sleep under the bridge at night.”

We believe that the future requires not only the existence of opportunity but making sure that every American has the chance to seize that opportunity, and that what we should be doing here at this moment is giving people the ability to make the most of their own lives, as workers, as family members, in communities, and as citizens. That is the central difference between the two approaches in the debate in Washington, DC, and in the country today. And the American people must choose which road they will walk into the 21st century.

And let me reiterate what others have said. I don't care what the polls say today. This is a time of profound change. And just as there is volatility in the economy, just as there is volatility in our society, there will inevitably be volatility in our political life. If you want this to come out in a way that you believe in, then you have to leave here tonight committed to doing everything you can to reach every friend, every neighbor, every person you come in contact with, to try to convince that person that this is the road we should walk together into the 21st century. This is the road we should walk together.

And you have lots of specific examples. They talked about the deficit; we brought it down. They say they want to help working people and value families, but we stood up for the family and medical leave law that Chris Dodd had to fight 7 years for because they fought it every step of the way.

We, those of us who are here tonight, can afford to be here, but we're still for raising the minimum wage, because we want people who raise families and work full time to be able to live in dignity. That's important.

It's one thing to say you're for law and order, but we put a hundred thousand police officers

on the street, helping to reduce the crime level. We put money into community programs to prevent crimes so our children have something to say yes to as well as something to say no to. We did pass the assault weapons ban, and we also passed the Brady bill. And you know what? None of those hunters shooting at those moose that Robin portrayed so well tonight have lost their guns. But 60,000 people—60,000 people did lose out. Sixty thousand people with criminal records have not been able to buy handguns because of the passage of the Brady bill. We were right. That was the right decision for America.

We think everybody ought to be able to go to college, because what you can earn depends on what you can learn. And so we fought for a new student loan program, lower cost, less hassle, better repayment terms. We were for it, and by and large they weren't.

So we have very different views. None of those cases—not a single, solitary one—involves the Government guaranteeing an outcome to any citizen. What did we try to do? We tried to guarantee safe streets, the opportunity to get an education, the opportunity to get a job, a healthy economy. And the same thing is true with the environment. I plead guilty to believing we cannot grow the American economy over the long run unless we preserve the quality of our land, of our water, our natural resources, and the animals who inhabit this Earth with us. I am guilty. I plead guilty. And I believe most of the American people would say the same thing.

That doesn't guarantee us anything except the chance to have a decent, coherent life. And so I say to you again, if you believe that every person ought to have a chance to make the most of his or her life; if you are sick and tired of seeing this country divided by race, by religion, over these issues that serve to drive a wedge between the American people, and you know that unless we come together we'll never be the country we ought to be; if you want your country to stand up for peace and freedom, even when you may not agree with the President on every issue—I've done a lot of things that weren't popular with some groups, whether it was Haiti or Mexico or getting involved in the Northern Ireland situation for the first time, and I know that a lot of people say from time to time, well, maybe he does this, that, or the other thing too much.

But let me say this, 20 years from now I want your country to be the strongest country in the world. But other countries will be stronger than they are today. And we have to make sure that other countries join us in fighting terrorism, in standing up against dangerous weapons, in standing up to drug smuggling, in standing up for a decent life for all the children of this world. If we don't cooperate with these countries and try to lead and shape the future, then it will diminish the future for all of us. And if you believe all that, then I ask you to leave here committed not to saying, "Okay, I did my part. I went to that fundraiser. We raised \$12 million. Big deal." No, I ask you to walk away and say, "I'm going to work every day between now and election day in November so we walk the right road into the future." That is my commitment, and that's what I want you to do.

Lastly, let me make this point. If we seek to prevail, we must have a strong sense of history and a big heart. This country has had a few major decision points in its history. When we started—Robin did a little debate about the Founding Fathers—all the things we take for granted today, they were big decisions: would we have a Bill of Rights or not; how were we going to limit Government to protect people; would we be one country or just a little collection of States.

The next big crisis we had was the Civil War, when Abraham Lincoln gave his life, first to keep us one country and, second, to make us live up to the letter of the Constitution and get rid of slavery. Then, a hundred years ago we had an age very like today, when the economy changed, the way we lived and worked changed. And Theodore Roosevelt, a great Republican President, and Woodrow Wilson, a great Democratic President, led us into what we now call the progressive era, when we said, "Hey, this industrial age is a great thing. People being able to move out of the country and live in the city, it's a great thing. But it's not a great thing that children are working 60 hours a week. It's not a great thing that women are being abused in the workplace. It's not a great thing that we are destroying our natural resources. It's not a great thing that small businesses are being crushed by unfair monopolies and not having a chance. We think we'll use the power of Government to help people make more of their own lives and preserve what is

essential to this country." And that's what we've got to do again today.

When President Roosevelt got us through the Depression and stood up for freedom against fascism in World War II, when we stood up against communism in the cold war, all these things kept America what it is today. And believe me, the decisions we have to make today as we move from the cold war to the global society, as we move from the industrial age to the information and technology age, they're every bit as profound.

No one has all the answers. The most important thing is, what road are we going to walk down? If you want America to be something, we have to have a strong sense of history. We have to understand that we are here today because our forebears were committed to living up to the promise of the Constitution, to meeting our challenges and protecting our values and giving everybody a chance.

And the other thing we have got to have is a little bit of heart. You know, they make fun of me sometimes. They say Bill Clinton is too emotional, feels your pain, and all that sort of stuff. Let me tell you something, you just think about it. When they lay you down for the last time, what are you going to remember? You wish you'd spent a few more hours at the office? No, you're going to think about your children, your family, the people you like, the people you love, how it felt to learn and experience things for the first time, the music that made you feel alive and big. That's what makes life worth living.

Yesterday I was in a little town in New Jersey that was dominated by basically white ethnic schoolkids. We were at an anti-teen-smoking event. But in this blue collar, ethnic town, there were Jewish kids, there were Hindus of Indian heritage, there were two young women in their Muslim formal dress in the school, all living together as Americans. All proving, once again, that we believe that anybody who just shares our values and will respect the honest differences of others should have the chance to live in this way, to live out their dreams that go way beyond economics. And I just want you to know why I feel that way.

Just before I left to come over here tonight, I met with a group of people. I frequently have coffee with people from around the country who are active in public affairs, and most of them couldn't afford to come here tonight. The peo-

ple I met with tonight were four local government leaders from the Northeast, three State legislative leaders from the South and the West, and some Hispanic and African-American women who are active in political organizations all over the country. And I just go around the table and let them talk.

About the 10th person to talk was this very tall, stately, impressive African-American woman from San Francisco. She looked at me—this is self-serving, but I am going to tell you anyway—this woman looked at me and said, “Before we get down to what I came to talk about, let’s get first things first.” She said, “My daddy is 75 years old, and he lives in St. Louis, but he was born and grew up in Hope, Arkansas”—the same little town in Arkansas I was born in—“and he went to Yeager High School,” which was the all-black high school at the time when the schools were segregated. “And he told me that your grandfather, at his little store, was one of only four white people in town that would really do business with black folks.” She said, “Is that true?”

I said, “Yes, ma’am, it’s true. And I can still remember when I was 5 years old, sitting on that wooden store counter next to a big jar of Jackson’s cookies that were this big and sold for a penny apiece, listening to my granddaddy tell me that those people who came into his store were good people, and they worked hard, and they deserved a better deal in life.”

## Remarks to the Saxophone Club May 8, 1996

*The President.* Thank you very much. I tell you, there’s not much left for me to say. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Matt and all the leaders of the Saxophone Club, and all of you who have been with us all these years. It has always been a joy for me to come to the Saxophone Club and see all of your faces filled with hope and energy. And even when we have to be late coming here and it’s midnight, you’re still raring to go, and that’ll take us to victory and that’s good.

Now, let me tell you folks, that’s what makes this country great. Our political system is not great because it’s a political system. It is not even great because it works economically. It’s great because it gives us all a chance to live out our dreams and because in every generation we keep trying to meet the challenges and protect our values and live up to what we say we believe in. That is really what this is all about.

And we cannot go into the global economy of the 21st century by walking away from our common responsibilities and saying that we don’t have a common responsibility to help everybody’s kids live up to the fullest of their dreams. You think about it, talk about it, stand up for it, work for it. Don’t be overconfident, and we will prevail.

Thank you, and God bless you, and good night.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:32 p.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Donald L. Fowler, national chairman, Senator Christopher J. Dodd, general chairman, and Marvin Rosen, national finance chairman, Democratic National Committee; Terence McAuliffe, finance chairman, Clinton/Gore ’96; Dan Dutko and Beth Dozoretz, dinner cochair; musician Stevie Wonder; comedian Robin Williams; Alma Brown, widow of former Secretary of Commerce Ronald H. Brown; and Reform Party Presidential candidate Ross Perot.

I want to say to you how proud I am to be on this stage with Tipper Gore, and all that she’s done, how profoundly grateful I am in ways, as I said earlier tonight, that will never be fully known until I write my memoirs, for the contributions that Al Gore has made to the United States of America.

And I want to say that you couldn’t have gladdened my heart any more with anything than you did when you gave such an intense and spontaneous and genuine cheer to the First Lady. [*Applause*] Thank you. I want you to know what I whispered to her when you were doing